



DUST CONTROL: VACUUMING AND DUST MATS

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Key Messages:

- All homes have dust, which can contain allergens, but controlling dust can be a very important way to help control asthma.
- Control dust by 2 strategies:
 - 1) Don't let it get into the house (control track-in).
 - 2) Get rid of the dust in the house by effective cleaning.

Recommended Client Actions:

- ❖ Install and use doormat. Clean on both sides once a month.
- ❖ Remove shoes when entering house.
- ❖ Using correct vacuuming technique, vacuum floors and furniture:
 - 2 times a week - child's bedroom
 - 1 time a week - other floors and furniture
- ❖ Dust : 2 times a week - child's bedroom & play area
 - 1 time a week – other rooms
- ❖ Make sure your child with asthma is out of the house (or at least the room) when you vacuum or dust, and for 20-30 minutes after you finish. This gives any dust and allergens that got stirred up during cleaning time to settle down.
- ❖ Fill in and mail vacuum warranty card before end of visit.
- ❖ Maintain vacuum regularly.

CAS/CHW Actions:

- Assess prior education received by client and client's knowledge.
- Perform 3 spot test & record results on
- Demonstrate: halogen light dust demonstration.
- Demonstrate how to vacuum.
- Ask client to try vacuum and all the attachments.
- Educate/demonstrate vacuum use.
- Assure that client completes and encourage them to mail the warranty card.
- If caretaker has allergies or asthma, conduct Dust Mask Protocol.

Supplies

- ☐ Vacuum
- ☐ Door mat
- ☐ Extra Vacuum belt
- ☐ Vacuum bag - Note: Some clients may need more if really motivated.
CAS/CHW may decide on how many bags to give -3 maximum.

Educational Handouts

- ☐ Vacuuming technique
- ☐ Repair flyer

Referrals

None

Future Visits: Assessment

- Assess frequency of vacuuming, especially in child's bedroom.
- Ask how vacuuming is going and if the client has any questions on how to use the vacuum.
- Ask if the client is using the dust sensor light to guide vacuuming. Is the light turning green? How long does it take?
- **Perform the three-spot vacuum test** in same location as previous visit.

Vacuum maintenance – Assess need for the following:

- 1) How to use the instruction book.
- 2) How to check to see how full the bag is.
- 3) How to change vacuum bags.
- 4) How to clean sensor plate by wiping with cloth.
 - ☐ Do this once every six months or after changing four bags.

CAS/CHW Future Actions:

- Perform 3 spot test in same spots as previously done & record results. Discuss progress made since last visit.
- Demonstrate how to check the belt. Advise checking belts for tightness once a month and to replace when broken or slack.
- Review importance of wiping sensor plate with cloth each time bag is changed.
- Show how to clean the agitator by removing and/or cutting strings and debris from around agitator.

- Observe client vacuuming and demonstrate how to vacuum, if needed.
- **Change belt at the one-year exit visit.**

Background:

- ❖ **When the dust is disturbed, it rises into the air. Once in the air, it can be breathed into the lungs.**

Dust carries many allergens that make asthma worse when they get into the lungs.

Dust can contain dust mites, animal dander, and mold allergens.

- a. Dust can also carry other substances that may harm a child's health, such as lead, pesticide residue and other toxic chemicals.

Cleaning can set off allergies and asthma by temporarily raising dust in the air. If the person doing the cleaning has allergies or asthma, s/he may want to use a dust mask (see dust mask protocol).

☐ HALOGEN LIGHT DUST DEMONSTRATION:

- 1) Dim lights in a carpeted room. Shine light above surface of carpet to see how much dust is in the air.
- 2) Ask client to walk or stomp on the carpet.
- 3) Shine the light above surface of carpet to demonstrate that dust can be released from carpet into the air.

☐ HOW TO PERFORM THE 3 SPOT TEST:

- 1) Select a room. First choice location is the child's bedroom, but if there is no carpet there, use the carpeted area where the child spends most of his/her time.
- 2) Select the 3 spots to test. **Spots should be at least 3 feet away from each other.** Note the location of the 3 spots and the room where it was performed in the diagram above, labeling them as "#1", "#2", and "#3" and the distance between the spots (estimating is OK).
- 3) Set the height of the vacuum with the lever on the base of the vacuum.
- 4) Hold the vacuum stationary & set the lever to the level appropriate to the type of carpet:
 - Hard flooring = only hard flooring such as vinyl or tile
 - Next large tick mark up = level loop
 - The next large tick mark up (middle of scale) = plush carpeting
 - The next large tick mark up = shag carpeting.

- Note – For combination carpets (those with plush and level) use plush setting.

5) Record the amount of time it takes in each spot (use a stopwatch) for the green light to come on. **There is a 3-minute maximum time for the 3 spot test.** If the light has not turned green after 3 minutes, turn the vacuum off and check the “3 minutes or longer” box above.

☐ **TO CONTROL TRACK-IN OF DUST:**

- 1) Take shoes off as soon as you enter the door.
- 2) Store the shoes near the doorway on a rack or on the floor.
- 3) Use a commercial-quality doormat.
 - a. The best mat is 2' x 3', is made of dense level-loop woven nylon pile, and has non-slip rubber backing, or a piece of level loop or plush carpet is an option. Rubber or coco mats don't work well.
 - b. Place inside the doorway, or outside where it will not get wet.
 - c. Wipe feet twice on the mat when entering.
 - d. Make sure everyone, including kids, uses the mat.
 - e. Vacuum the front & backside of the mat once a month. This is best done outside.

☐ **TO GET RID OF DUST IN THE HOUSE:**

- 1) Dust : 2 times a week - child's bedroom & play area
 1 time a week – other rooms
- 2) Dusting can be done with a dust cloth but a Grab-It cloth or a Swiffer cloth can hold onto the dust without letting it disperse into the room. Use a damp dust cloth or Swiffer cloth to dust vinyl or leather furniture.
- 3)** Dust articles in the room that are higher up before dusting articles that are at a lower level.
- 4)** Dusting before vacuuming will allow dust that has fallen to be picked up by the vacuum.
- 5)** Using correct vacuuming technique, vacuum floors and cloth-covered furniture:
 - 2 times a week - child's bedroom
 - 1 time a week - other floors and furniture
- 6) Clean rugs regularly (more on this another visit).

❑ USING A DUST MOP INSTEAD OF THE VACUUM:

- Never pick up the dust mop while mopping. That will release the dirt back into the air, and it will again settle on the floor.
- Take the mop outside when finished and shake it out to release the dust.
- Some people like to use a large wet mop with a terrycloth cover that is especially designed for hardwood floors instead of a dry dust mop. If you do, it works well if you wet the mop with a little dish soap mixed with water.

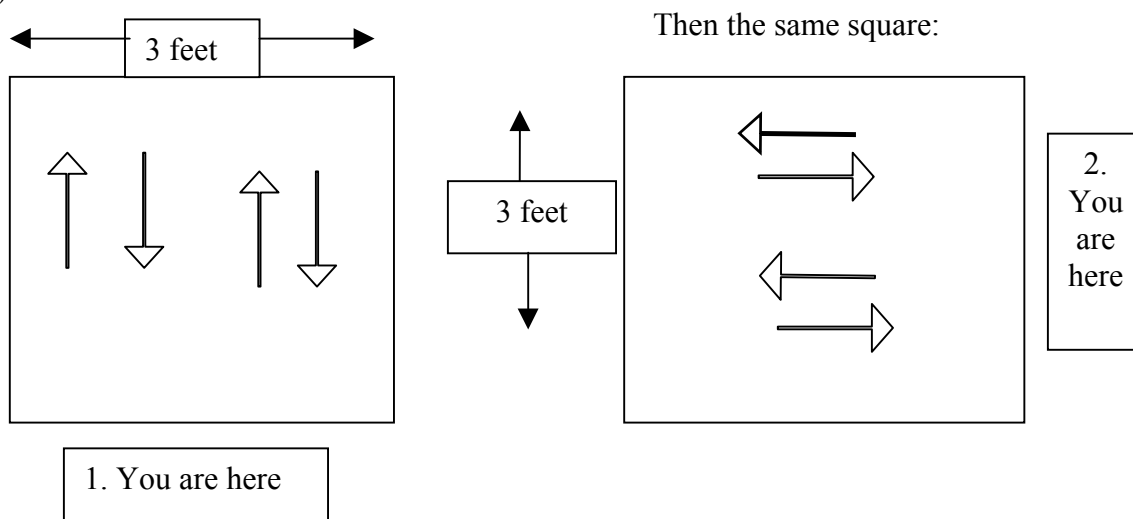
Swiffers or Grab-it cloths and the floor-cleaning tool that is sold with them can be used to clean wood floors.

❑ ABOUT VACUUMS:

- A low-emission vacuum is the best type for people with asthma because it has a special filter that keeps all the allergens in the dust collected by the vacuum in the machine.
- Regular vacuums allow some of the allergens to leak back out in to the air.
- It is still better to use a regular vacuum compared to not vacuuming at all. If you use a regular vacuum, you can use allergy-filtration, double-layer bags inside the vacuum. These will help cut down on the amount of allergens that leak out.
- It may take a lot of time to get the dust out of the house the first time, but once the house is clean, it's quicker and easier to keep it clean.
- Vacuum away from rug fringe, blind cords, string, yarn, coins, paper clips, gum, electrical cords (including one from vacuum cleaner).
- Never vacuum water, other liquids or wet objects.
- If cord gets caught in vacuum, turn off vacuum using switch, unplug immediately and release cord. If damaged, repair or replace cord.
- Unplug cord at wall and pull only on plug, not on the cord. If plug comes loose from cord, replace it.
- Rewind cord after each use.

❑ HOW TO VACUUM

- 1) Use the switch to turn the vacuum on and off. Pulling the plug out of the wall socket will leave the dirt finder light on and the battery will run down.
- 2) The “Embedded Dirt Finder” indicator should be on “Hi” to get out high levels of dirt or ground-in dirt that may be underneath the carpet.
- 3) Check bag before each use and replace full bag when indicator is on the dotted line.
- 4) The vacuum is meant only for picking up dust. Pick up toys, debris and large pieces of trash before vacuuming. Don’t use the vacuum to pick up large pieces of debris.
- 5) Vacuum a 3 by 3 foot square in forward and back motion until green light comes on and stays on.
- 6) Move the vacuum as follows:



- Go back and forth once over one strip, starting at the bottom of the square. Then move the vacuum over to the right and go back and forth over the next strip, until the whole area is covered.
- Start over again on the left and repeat the whole pattern until the green light comes on and stays on.
- When the entire area has a green light, move the vacuum to the side of the same square and repeat the pattern (vacuuming at 90 degrees from the first pattern) until the green light goes on.
- Move to the next square and repeat.
- If each square takes a long time to clean, you can work on one square at a time. They don’t all have to be done at once. The areas nearest the door will take longest to clean, so

you might start in the middle of the room. It is better to clean a small area well than to try to clean a large area and not get to the dust deep in the carpet.

❑ USING THE VACUUM ON AREA RUGS:

- Use the setting appropriate to the type of carpet. Stand on rug to hold it in place.
- Avoid the fringe with the vacuum. To clean the fringe, use the dusting brush on the hose and vacuum parallel to the fringes.

❑ USING THE VACUUM ON BARE FLOORS:

- Set the slide knob to BARE FLOORS and use the same cleaning pattern as for cleaning carpets.
- When moving the knob, make sure the vacuum handle is in the upright position.
- When vacuuming a wooden floor, use a brush attachment. The beater bars in the vacuum can damage wood floors.

❑ USING THE VACUUM TO DUST:

- Use dusting brush hose attachment for books, tabletops, lamps, baseboards, fringes of area rugs, drapes.
- Make sure to close the cover over the hose tube. The vacuum must be in the upright position to use the hose attachments.

❑ USING THE VACUUM TO CLEAN FURNITURE:

- Use furniture nozzle, the small wide tool that does not have brushes.
- It is important to vacuum upholstered furniture weekly, especially items that the child spends time on.

❑ USING THE VACUUM TO CLEAN CRACKS:

- Use the crevice tool for getting between furniture cushions and at the carpet edge.

❑ VACUUM MAINTENANCE:

- Use the instruction book if you have questions about how your vacuum works.
- Open the vacuum and inspect the bag after every hour of vacuuming or when the CHECK BAG indicator turns “red” Change the bag when indicator is “red” or dirt reaches dotted line on bag. A bag can get half full in an hour in a dusty room.
- Wipe sensor plate with cloth every six months or after changing bags four times.
- Check belts for tightness once/month, replace when broken or slack.
- If string or other debris gets caught in agitator, turn off the vacuum and remove the debris by gently pulling it out or cutting it out.